

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03

INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15 CAB-02 DOTE-00

FAA-00 OC-06 CCO-00 OPR-02 /092 W

-----211401Z 040021 /45

R 210747Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7123

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, JA

SUBJECT: SPRING WAGE NEGOTIATIONS: NATIONAL RAILWAY WORKERS AND
OTHER PUBLIC CORPORATION UNIONS CALL OFF STRIKE

REF: A) TOKYO 5676, B) TOKYO 5493

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. SOHYO-AFFILIATED PUBLIC CORPORATION
UNIONS' UNIFIED STRIKE FOR 1977 WAGE HIKES, SPEARHEADED BY
NATIONWIDE WALKOUT ON JAPAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS, CALLED OFF
EVENING APRIL 20 AFTER PUBLIC CORPORATION LABOR RELATIONS
COMMISSION ISSUED ARBITRATION AWARD AVERAGING 9.12 PERCENT OR
13,606 YEN (\$48.40) MONTHLY INCREASE. SETTLEMENTS RANGE FROM
8.72 PERCENT OR 14,243 YEN (\$51.80) MONTHLY INCREASE FOR NAT-
IONAL RAILWAY WORKERS TO 9.58 PERCENT OR 13,044 YEN (\$47.43) FOR
TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKERS. (NOTE: PERCENTAGES DERIVED FROM WAGE
BASE, WHICH VARIES FROM ENTERPRISE TO ENTERPRISE.) AS IN
PRIVATE SECTOR, INCREASES ARE SLIGHTLY HIGHER THAN LAST YEAR
(8.8 PERCENT) AND ALMOST EQUAL TO ESTIMATED FY-76 9.2 PERCENT
ANNUAL RISE IN CONSUMER PRICE INDEX. WHILE SOHYO LEADERS PUBLICLY
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CRITICIZING ARBITRATION AWARD AS INSUFFICIENT, THEY
AT SAME TIME CLAIMING THAT, IN CONTRAST WITH 1975 AND
1976, THEY VICTORIOUS IN THIS YEAR'S "SPRING STRUGGLE"
BECAUSE MANAGEMENT UNABLE TO ACHIEVE ITS GOAL OF
LIMITING WAGE BOOST TO ESTIMATED 5-6 PERCENT INCREASE IN
REAL GNP IN 1976. END UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BEGIN LOU. COMMENT: WITH SETTLEMENTS REACHED IN NATIONAL RAILWAYS AND OTHER PUBLIC CORPORATIONS, MOST PEACEFUL "SPRING STRUGGLE" IN DECADE VIRTUALLY OVER. NORMALLY MILITANT RAILWAY UNIONS STRUCK FOR ONLY 2 1/2 DAYS THIS YEAR, AS OPPOSED TO WALKOUTS TOTALLING EIGHT DAYS LAST SPRING. NEW SOHYO LEADERSHIP TEAM OF MAKIEDA AND TOMIZUKA, SENSING GROWING PUBLIC OUTRAGE OVER ANNUAL PARALYSIS OF COMMUTER TRAIN LINES AND FEARFUL OF IMPACT ON SOCIALIST CANDIDATES IN THIS SUMMER'S UPPER HOUSE ELECTIONS, SCALED DOWN SIZE AND DURATION OF STRIKES AND WORKED BEHIND SCENES WITH VETERAN LABOR MINISTER ISHIDA TO SECURE MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY SETTLEMENT. RESULT IS TO STRENGTHEN PUBLIC IMPRESSION THAT MAKIEDA AND TOMIZUKA ARE MODERATES TRYING TO GIVE SOHYO NEW IMAGE.

SOME LABOR DISPUTE CONTINUING. JAPAN AIRLINES' UNIONS NOW ON STRIKE AND THERE IS GOOD PROSPECT THAT AFTER THEY SETTLE, WORKERS OF FOREIGN AIRLINES, INCLUDING PAN AM AND NORTHWEST, WILL STAGE WALKOUTS. END LOU.
SHOESMITH

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